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ABSTRACT

This report outlines recent efforts and offers specific policy recommendations to improve transfer and articulation policies within the Oregon State university system. After taking note of the growing scope and complexity of transfer and articulation throughout the nation, and in Oregon in particular, it discusses the effects of distance education, outcomes-based education, performance indicators, individualized and accelerated academic programs, public accountability, and "customer" expectations on transfer and articulation policies. The report continues by outlining the guiding principles and strategic actions recommended by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education in regard to the following: co-admission and co-enrollment programs; articulation agreements; an additional block transfer degree; baccalaureate degree outcomes; course-equivalency information systems; discipline-based problem solving; professional/technical courses, the research agenda; institutional responsibilities; course sharing; early options programs; intrasystem transfer issues; and an intersector transfer plan. Recent efforts by Oregon's higher education institutions to improve transfer and articulation are summarized, along with other intersector and articulation activities. (MDM)

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ED 420 214

Oregon University System

Transfer and Articulation: A Status Report with Recommendations for Board Policy and Strategic Action

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Oregon State Board of Higher Education
February 20, 1998

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Introduction

What do we know about transfer and articulation? First, that they're not the same thing. Transfer is defined as the process for reviewing and admitting applicants to undergraduate programs who have previous college work.[1] Articulation is the process whereby two or more institutions align courses and/or programs. Second, these are not just Oregon issues, but are receiving widespread national attention. According to a 1996 report by the National Center for Education Statistics, only about 37 percent of the students who earn a baccalaureate degree do so from the school at which they first matriculated. Third, student movement between and among institutions is not necessarily linear (e.g., two years at a community college followed by two years at a university). Several recent studies document the multiple patterns of student movement in their pursuit of higher education (e.g., Kearney et al., at a large public Midwestern university, 1995; Kinnick et al., at PSU, 1997). Fourth, an increasing array of postsecondary educational providers and delivery modes further challenges our ability to provide for the smooth movement of students through their postsecondary experience. And, finally, educational reform (both nationally and in Oregon) and higher expectations by prospective employers are moving higher education away from traditional evaluation by course credits and contact hours to evaluation based on proficiency and specific outcomes.

Direction of State Leadership

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education, Governor Kitzhaber, and the Oregon Legislature have all targeted improved transfer and articulation as key educational priorities. Following is a summary of recent actions.

Board of Higher Education. In late 1996, the Board formed a Solution Team on Access, Transfer, and Community Colleges. As part of its Systemwide strategic planning, it was charged with developing a barrier-free admission and transfer process to enable students to achieve their academic goals, and partnering with the community colleges to provide baccalaureate capacity and access. The Solution Team recommended action in several areas: credit acceptance; student access strategies; transfer; communication; and comprehensive, collaborative students services.

Governor Kitzhaber. The Governor's Task Force on Higher Education and the Economy report (12/97) encouraged "all Oregon institutions of higher learning to form alliances to serve the needs of Oregon learners." The Governor's Task Force on College Access report (8/97) called for a "level of transfer much more general than that offered by the Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer degree" (AA/OT); a Web site and toll-free phone number to increase communication; and transfer agreements. In December 1997, Governor Kitzhaber reiterated to the Board his strong commitment to higher education access, stating that no Oregonian should be "left out by reason of geography, economic,

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[1] OUS transfer students must have completed a minimum of 24-36 credits of acceptable college-level work. The hours required vary among institutions. (Students with fewer college credits are admitted as first-time freshmen. This does not mean their incoming credits are not accepted.)

racial or ethnic background, time constraints, or avoidable logistical problems." His goal is to achieve "complete program transferability among community colleges and universities, as well as facilitating transferability issues with private and out-of-state schools."

Oregon Legislature. During the last legislative session, two bills in particular address the need for intersector progress toward solving transfer and articulation problems. HB 2387 directs the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education to "jointly develop a plan for the transfer of credits between community colleges and state institutions of higher education" and to submit this plan for approval at the next legislative session. SB 919 directs the two boards "to develop policies and procedures that ensure maximum transfer of credits between community colleges and state institutions of higher education."

The Oregon Context

Current Perspective. Myriad postsecondary educational choices currently exist, creating a staggering number of possible educational pathways for students. OUS and its partners need to be prepared to receive these students. In 1995-96, there were 3,706 postsecondary education institutions in the United States (Andersen, 1997). OUS currently offers 321 baccalaureate degree programs. In 1996-97, more than 3,000 new students were admitted to OUS undergraduate programs from Oregon community colleges alone, and an additional 2,258 students were admitted from 742 different out-of-state institutions.

OUS and its partners have tackled transfer and articulation problems through a number of avenues. Among the most notable are the AA/OT degree; common course numbering; the development of comprehensive course equivalency tables that are accessible on the Web; the K-16 Web page "ONE"; and numerous OUS-community college partnership arrangements, such as the University Center in Bend.

Issues regarding credit transfer continue to be at the heart of higher education's challenge. Non-application of credit may occur for any number of reasons, such as:

- the receiving institution limits the number of professional-technical courses it accepts;
- the course in question is college preparatory (i.e., remedial);
- the credit was granted on the basis of prior learning (experiential) and not considered equivalent to offerings at the receiving institution;
- the course was taken at a nonaccredited institution; or
- the student received an unsatisfactory grade.

Realistically, some problems will always be beyond the ability of higher education to address (e.g., additional coursework required due to a student changing his/her major).

Future Perspective. Education is changing, throughout the nation and in Oregon. As a result, the articulation/transfer picture is growing in both scope and complexity. Some important elements of the new context follow.

- As more out-of-state providers enter the Oregon educational market, placebound students will be able to "attend" non-Oregon institutions. Electronically delivered coursework will provide time-bound and placebound students with more educational opportunities from a variety of providers. As a result, student transcripts for transfer will become more varied and complicated.

- One of the biggest changes underway in education in the nation is the concerted move to outcomes-based education. Educational sectors are being asked to define learning goals, standards, and outcomes of courses, programs, and degrees.

- The educational emphasis on outcomes extends to performance indicators approved by the Board (11/97). An access indicator calls for measuring the effectiveness of transfer programs (e.g., the proportion of transfers of total enrollment, the graduation rate of transfer students) and will produce data to track the progress made.

- Students no longer move lockstep through a predetermined high school curriculum, but have opportunities for more individualized and accelerated academic programs. Articulation strategies such as co-enrollment and early admission will demand increased attention from higher education providers.

- Public accountability and "customer" expectations will continue to grow in importance in this state, as elsewhere. Oregonians want to see evidence that the public sector exhibits a market orientation and works effectively with other sectors in providing students a rich array of programs and services.

Next Steps

Although the scope and complexity of transfer and articulation issues are daunting, OUS and its partners are resolved to create the most seamless process possible. Changes in the future context — and others yet to be identified — suggest that transfer and articulation initiatives need to foster a "co-evolving" of the educational sectors and economy to meet the needs of higher education's varied customers. The following proposed policy and strategic actions affirm the System's commitment to advance transfer and articulation initiatives within current and emerging contexts, with an emphasis on relationships between OUS and the community colleges.

Policy and Principles

The goal of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education is for Oregonians to have maximum academic program articulation and transferability.

To that end, the Board endorses the following assumptions and guiding principles:

1. Responsibility for successful student transfer and articulation is shared among OUS, community colleges, K-12, students, and independent and other educational providers; cooperation and collaboration are essential.

2. Broad curricular diversity among the OUS institutions and community colleges creates a dynamic tension when trying to resolve problems of articulation.

3. OUS institutions, as well as intersector groups (e.g., Joint Boards Articulation Commission) are actively addressing problems that arise in transfer and articulation processes.

4. Communication is fundamental, both among educational providers and with students.

5. Transfer and articulation agreements may be constructed at many levels (e.g., system to system, institution to institution, program to program) and for any number of reasons (e.g., regional partnerships, workforce needs).

6. Transfer and articulation initiatives must be structured enough to guide action, yet flexible enough to allow for student, societal, and educational change and evolution.

7. Initiatives should be informed by sound research.

8. Initiatives should reflect the increasing move by all levels and sectors of education to outcomes- and proficiency-based learning and admissions processes.

9. Transfer and articulation initiatives are not limited to curricular alignment alone and, consequently, should be responsive to student service needs (e.g., timely and accurate advising, financial aid).

Strategic Actions

To implement the policy and principles, the Board of Higher Education directs the Chancellor's Office and the System campuses to take specific action in the following areas:

1. *Co-admission/co-enrollment programs.* Develop additional co-admission and co-enrollment programs for eligible students who begin their postsecondary education on community college campuses and who plan to complete their baccalaureate program at the partnering OUS institution. By enabling timely relationships with students through such programs, degree completion has a better chance of success.

2. *Articulation agreements.* Support the development of articulation agreements between individual institutions within the array of educational service providers in the state. As the explosion of distance education, alternative format, and Web-based courses and programs from multiple educational service providers continues, formalized arrangements will facilitate an orderly flow of students from campus to campus. The new major regional partnerships have strong potential for meeting educational access needs.

3. *Additional block transfer degree.* Work with the community colleges to develop a block transfer Associate of Science (AS) degree that would better fit students whose goals are to transfer to OUS programs in the sciences, health sciences, engineering,

and other technical fields (and where the current AA/OT degree does not align with the baccalaureate major requirements).

4. *Baccalaureate degree outcomes.* Establish the learning outcomes expected of a student graduating with a baccalaureate degree. Ease of transfer should eventually result if the focus is on the learning outcomes a student is able to demonstrate, rather than the course credits accumulated. Building on the work of PASS and other outcomes-based initiatives, a Systemwide task force, with participation from the community colleges, will be charged with identifying baccalaureate degree outcomes and their application to the transfer process.

5. *Course equivalency information systems.*
   - Uniformly compile, regularly update, and widely distribute information regarding course equivalencies (between OUS institution courses and community college courses). System institutions presently lacking this capability should make it a priority for the next admission cycle. Publishing information on the World Wide Web, with a user-friendly interface, is the preferred distribution method. Contact persons at each institution should be identified for students, advisors, counselors, or others needing assistance in finding and interpreting the equivalency information as published.

   - At the System level, a standard course-equivalency information system should be created that builds on the efforts already in place at the campus level. Such a comprehensive data system would enable students and advisors to determine the relationship between all community college courses and similar courses offered at OUS institutions. Resources to accomplish this strategic action should be sought.

6. *Discipline-based problem solving.* Convene and conduct periodic meetings among faculty in the same disciplines in community colleges and OUS institutions to discuss issues of mutual concern and to resolve problems. The Joint Boards Articulation Commission (JBAC), the Academic Council (OUS), and/or the Council of Instructional Administrators (community colleges) should sponsor such faculty forums. For example, faculty must resolve transfer issues related to similar (or the same) courses offered at the upper-division level in OUS institutions that are offered at the lower-division level in community colleges. Resolutions are required that do not disadvantage (e.g., with respect to upper-division credit requirements) transfer students who have earned credits in the community college courses.

7. *Professional-technical courses.* Reach agreement between OUS institutions and the community colleges about how professional-technical courses and programs are defined and then operationalize transfer policies and procedures consistent with those definitions. Further, expand institutional policies and practices that facilitate student transfer from professional-technical programs into compatible and/or complementary baccalaureate programs.

8. *Research agenda.* Establish a focused research agenda to inform the transfer and articulation policy agenda, and current and future strategic directions. Examples of

such research questions should include (but are not limited to) : (1) What happens to the large number of AA/OT graduates who apparently do *not* transfer to an OUS institution? (2) What are the highest-demand programs for students transferring into OUS institutions? (3) How much time do students transferring in with an AA/OT, and/or other associate degree take to earn a baccalaureate degree? (4) What are the comparative success rates of students with different patterns of pursuits of the baccalaureate degree?

9. *Institutional responsibilities.* Recognize that every institution bears an administrative responsibility for implementation and oversight of matters affecting transfer students. Each campus should review its capacity to respond to student problems and concerns, and make improvements as needed. (The Web-based JBAC Articulation Hotline provides links to the campus contacts who are responsible for transfer student issues.)

10. *Communication, course sharing, and articulation.* Develop, in cooperation with the ONE (Oregon Network for Education) project, a Web-based common college catalog of distance education courses available from Oregon and partner institutions. Establish a "Common Course Marketplace" comprised of those distance education courses for which credit would be accepted at any participating Oregon institution. Resources to accomplish this strategic action should be sought.

11. *Early options programs.* Develop, with the Joint Boards, policies that support new and/or expanded partnerships among OUS, community colleges, and high schools to better serve "college-ready" high school students in early college programs and expedite student progress toward a college degree.

12. *Intrasystem transfer issues.* Resolve "internal" (OUS institution to OUS institution) programmatic transfer issues. For example, students transferring upper-division credits from a System program that is not professionally accredited are sometimes required to repeat courses when moving to a program that *is* professionally accredited. Professionally accredited programs should work with "sending" programs to develop learning outcome-based ways to assure that transfer credits meet the specifications of their curriculum. Where this is unacceptable to accreditation groups, work to accommodate the demonstrated learning outcomes of transfer students.

13. *Intersector transfer plan.* Work with the JBAC and its action teams to respond to the requirements of HB 2387, presenting an effective intersector transfer plan to the 1999 Legislature.

Staff Recommendation to the Board

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the proposed policy, guiding principles, and strategic actions on transfer and articulation. In addition, staff recommends the Board direct staff to work with campuses to establish timelines for implementation of these strategic actions, and report annually on progress made on student transfer and articulation issues.

Transfer Student Data

The following data further illuminate the context in which this policy document has been developed.

- In 1996-97, 42 percent of all new college transfer students came from Oregon community colleges and 31 percent came from out-of-state colleges (see Table 1).
- Of the 2,258 students transferring into OUS institutions from out of state in 1996-97, 1,086 (48 percent) were admitted as residents. All together, these students came from 742 different institutions.
- Annually, about 3,000 newly admitted undergraduate students transfer to an OUS institution from Oregon community colleges. Of that number, about 500 (17 percent) have earned the AA/OT degree.

Table 1
New Admitted OUS Undergraduate Transfers
by Educational Source: 1996-97

Other OUS Institutions	787	11%
Oregon Community Colleges	3,049	42%
Other Oregon Colleges	247	3%
Out-of-State Colleges	2,258	31%
Unknown	935	13%
Total	7,276	100%

Source: OUS Institutional Research Services

- Portland Community College, Lane Community College, Mt. Hood Community College, and Chemeketa Community College account for two-thirds (67 percent) of the community college transfer students to OUS institutions (see Table 2).
- OSU, PSU, and UO receive 83 percent of the community college transfer students each year (see Table 2).
- Of the total OUS undergraduate enrollment in 1996, about 17 percent (7,800 students) were Oregon community college transfers. At the time of their admission, about one-fourth had earned an AA/OT.
- In 1996-97, Oregon community colleges awarded 2,031 AA/OT degrees, up from the previous two years (1,867 in 1994-95; 1,781 in 1995-96). (See Table 3.)

Table 2
New Admitted Undergraduate Transfers from Oregon Community Colleges by Oregon Community College, to OUS Institution Base and Extended Enrollment,* Academic Year 1996-97

Community College	EOU	OIT	OSU	PSU	SOU	UO	WOU	Total
Blue Mountain	23	1	20	13	3	3	12	75
Central Oregon	5	4	65	18	20	24	7	143
Chemeketa	1	9	133	59	16	41	63	322
Clackamas	0	8	58	113	14	35	13	241
Clatsop	0	2	7	4	2	6	2	23
Lane	0	7	103	32	18	377	5	542
Linn-Benton	0	8	175	23	8	17	14	245
Mount Hood	2	8	56	184	10	40	18	318
Portland	0	37	101	634	23	73	26	894
Rogue	0	13	12	1	68	7	3	104
Southwestern Oregon	0	3	26	3	13	18	2	65
Treasure Valley	10	0	8	1	3	2	5	29
Umpqua	0	11	34	10	11	20	9	95
Total	41	111	798	1,095	209	663	179	3,096

**Excludes non-admitted students and postbaccalaureate non-grads*
Source: OUS Institutional Research Services, 1996-97 ERAN-05 report

Table 3
AA/OT Degrees Awarded by Oregon Community Colleges

Community College	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Blue Mountain	95	100	69
Central	151	121	122
Columbia Gorge	15	14	23
Chemeketa	296	277	304
Clackamas	139	197	181
Clatsop	31	26	19
Lane	201	225	218
Linn-Benton	103	92	117
Mt. Hood	232	163	218
Oregon Coast	9	5	28
Portland	274	243	355
Rogue	52	65	85
SW Oregon	62	48	69
Tillamook Bay	8	2	5
Treasure Valley	120	113	139
Umpqua	79	90	79
Total	1,867	1,781	2,031

Source: OUS Institutional Research Services

Recent Campus Activities

For several years, OUS institutions and community colleges in the state have been working together to forge partnerships and undertake new initiatives to facilitate a smoother transition for students as they migrate across institutional boundaries. This section describes recent efforts (meant to be illustrative, not all inclusive).

Eastern Oregon University

- Regional Partnership: Financial Aid. Eastern has consortial financial aid agreements with a number of community colleges that facilitate joint enrollment and transfer, and is presently developing a new agreement that will permit all financial aid administrative work to be located at the home institution. Called "The Oregon Model," it will first be implemented with the Eastern Oregon Collaborative Colleges Center (EOCCC), which involves EOU, Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC), and Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC). The model permits a student's home institution to contract with other institutions for the coursework not offered at the home campus.

- Course Equivalencies on the Web. Eastern has complete course articulation tables showing how courses from most other Oregon institutions would transfer to EOU. Also available is complete information on courses and degree requirements for every academic program at Eastern.

- "Other-Campus" Programs. For more than a decade, EOU has delivered baccalaureate programs on the BMCC and TVCC campuses. Eastern's teacher preparation programs are delivered on the campuses of Central Oregon Community College and OIT. And, in collaboration with other universities, Eastern delivers the Tri-State General Agriculture degree to BMCC and TVCC.

Oregon Health Sciences University

- Articulation: Nursing. In 1993, the OHSU School of Nursing, in collaboration with the Directors of Associate Degree Nursing Programs in the state, developed, for RN students with an associate degree, an articulation pathway to facilitate their matriculation into the baccalaureate nursing program. Students are awarded credit for lower-division courses that are similar to those taught at the junior year of the baccalaureate program. Students may also earn credit for experiences they have had as registered nurses.

- Articulation: Emergency Medical Services. In 1997, the OHSU Emergency Medical Services (EMS)/Paramedic Education program established an interinstitutional agreement with Chemeketa Community College (CCC) so that graduates of OHSU's paramedic program could attain an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree. Graduates receive a joint OHSU/CCC degree.

- Articulation: Medical Technology (MT). In 1997, an articulation policy was developed by OHSU's MT program, in collaboration with Portland Community College's (PCC) Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) program. A few features of the policy include: MLT students with an associate degree may transfer up to 110 credits toward the baccalaureate degree; credits for upper-division courses may be awarded based on student transcript assessment; and, by review of portfolio and with accrediting agency approval, students will not be required to repeat rotations of clinical experiences obtained in the MLT program.

Oregon Institute of Technology

- Regional Partnership. OIT is engaged in a collaborative partnership with Klamath Community College (KCC) and PCC. (In this arrangement, the newly formed KCC contracts with PCC for program accreditation and infrastructure services.) OIT and KCC work together under an agreement providing for coordination of general education services, cross-registration services, and tuition equalization on selected courses. The institutional partners have resolved such difficult issues as differences in admissions standards, residency for tuition purposes, FTE reporting, tuition and fee differences, billing procedures, student confidentiality, and student services for shared courses.

- Articulation: Software Engineering Technology. OIT is also engaged in an articulation agreement with PCC for students intending to transfer from the PCC software engineering technology program to the OIT program. PCC students are given full credit for all selected courses listed in the agreement.

Oregon State University

- Joint Admission. A joint admission program between OSU and Linn-Benton Community College (LBCC), to be implemented fall 1998, will allow students to be co-admitted and co-enrolled at both institutions. Discussions are underway for a similar program with Southwestern Oregon Community College (SWOCC).

- Course Equivalencies on the Web. OSU has articulation tables of coursework, including baccalaureate core courses, from almost all Oregon public and private two-year and four-year accredited colleges and universities on the Web. This database provides students, advisors, and others with a ready source of information on how courses will transfer to OSU.

- Communications. A new Transfer Recruiting Coordinator (teamed with the OSU Transfer/Articulation/Processing Coordinator) has been named to increase and improve communication with community colleges. In addition, an OSU Transfer Brochure, accompanied by articulation tables, catalogues, and open house/ visitation schedules, has been distributed to the community colleges.

- Easing Transfer. Revisions are being made in the OSU Academic Regulations to allow students to transfer professional-technical courses more easily, and in the

admission policy as it relates to repetition of courses and use of nondegree coursework for transfer admission.

Portland State University

- Partnership. In January 1997, PSU and Clackamas Community College (CCC) entered into a partnership agreement that promotes the successful movement of students between the two institutions. The arrangement has led to the creation of collaborative student support services, including joint student recruitment, co-admissions, integrated advisement and orientation, financial aid consortium agreements, and shared library and technological support services. Currently, 75 students are co-admitted to both institutions. Additionally, the agreement has integrated curricular offerings, enhanced faculty collaboration, and improved program articulation. PSU is actively involved in establishing similar partnerships with other community colleges in the metropolitan area.

Southern Oregon University

- Regional Partnership. SOU and Rogue Community College (RCC) have developed policies and procedures so that students can register for courses in Medford at either institution's registration centers. Staff are cross trained to use registration software and to answer questions about both RCC and SOU. Staff also spend time on site at the other's location, helping out during busy times. The two institutions have agreed to policies on student advising, testing for placement in math and writing courses, and have a financial aid agreement covering students co-enrolled at both institutions. Consistent with their intensive collaborative efforts, SOU and RCC share classrooms, science labs, and computer labs in Medford. The campuses have developed schedules that cross list courses so students can easily see all the offerings by both SOU and RCC (in the Medford area). A pilot project with a shared staff member helping to strengthen Native American programs at both institutions is in progress.

University of Oregon

- Preparation for Transfer. During winter and spring terms, UO and Lane Community College (LCC) jointly teach a course at LCC for students who plan to transfer. Prospective transfer students are given an introduction to processes, services, and physical facilities at UO. Each May, UO hosts a special orientation program targeted toward Oregon community college students who intend to transfer to UO in the fall. The program includes meeting with an adviser and class registration.

- "Other-Campus" Program. Planning is underway to offer the UO General Science major collaboratively with Central Oregon Community College (COCC) under the auspices of the University Center. All required coursework would be available in Bend.

Western Oregon University

- Partnership: Admission. A joint admission agreement with Chemeketa Community College (CCC) has recently been reached so that students are co-enrolled at WOU as they enter CCC. A special fast-track admission process has been implemented at Western for any CCC student completing an AA degree in computer science, fire service, or criminal justice. A similar fast-track enrollment and registration system is being developed for CCC graduates in teacher education.

Other Intersector Activities

In addition to the previous examples, other ongoing intersector activities demonstrate the increasing seamlessness of the educational sectors. Examples of these follow.

The PASS Project. OUS has been working collaboratively with high schools and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to develop new performance-based admission standards. This system, known as the Proficiency-based Admission Standards System (PASS), is unique in the nation. PASS is organized around a series of standards specifying what students need to be able to know and do to succeed in college. Students demonstrate these skills via tests, common performance assessments, and bodies of evidence their teachers score using common statewide criteria. Currently 30 high schools — enrolling 40 percent of the high school students in the state — are participating in the piloting activities.

Regular Meetings of Chief Academic Officers. At least once a year, the chief academic officers of System institutions and the community colleges convene to discuss intersector matters. Agenda topics have included transfer policy issues, distance delivery of courses and programs, the development of a common Web page (Oregon Network for Education — "ONE") for all educational sectors, and the partnerships that continue to evolve.

Discipline-based Faculty Meetings. A recent National Science Foundation grant program, administered by PSU, will convene meetings of faculty in math, sciences, and teacher education from all educational sectors — K-12, community colleges, and higher education.

Joint Boards Articulation Commission. The Joint Boards Articulation Commission (JBAC) has recently formed seven "action teams" in areas relating to transfer and articulation. The aim of the JBAC is to develop recommendations in these areas for Joint Boards' consideration and toward further clarification of transfer credit planning called for in HB 2387. The areas under consideration are:

- *Credit for Prior Learning.* Individual postsecondary institutions have varying policies regarding the granting of academic credit for experiences obtained outside the traditional classroom environment. Often, credit granted for such experience does not transfer between institutions and students are confused by the differences in institutional credit-granting practices.

- *Early Options.* A variety of options are available to high school students who wish to pursue college-level work during high school. Practices regarding acceptance of such credit for transfer are not uniform. A study of current policies and practices regarding the early participation of high school students in college courses and programs has already been endorsed by the Joint Boards. This is intended to lead to a determination of the need for a more standardized early options program in the state. The study, conducted by the OUS Office of Academic Affairs, is well along, and a final report to the Joint Boards is anticipated in summer 1998.

- *Professional-Technical Courses.* Courses of this nature are vocationally oriented and traditionally have not been considered in the mainstream of courses that are "college transfer." The demarcation between "professional-technical" and "college transfer" courses is not as clear as it once was. Additionally, in recent years, many Oregon community colleges have revised the numbering system for their professional-technical courses (an alpha-numeric numbering system the same as for transfer courses), leading to some confusion regarding what is intended to be college transfer coursework and what is considered professional-technical. Many System institutions limit the number of professional-technical credits accepted as elective transfer credits, frustrating student transfer efforts. A policy regarding the inclusion of professional-technical credits as electives in the block transfer AA/OT degree has been a neglected area. The JBAC Student Transfer Committee is currently developing its recommendations.

- *Data and Information Tracking.* Much progress has been made in recent years toward the sharing of student data between the Office of Community College Services and the Oregon University System. We are now able to track, better than ever before, the movement of students between systems. The action team will suggest improvements to the arrangements already in place.

- *Seamless Student Services.* For students to move easily between an Oregon community college and a System campus, better integration of student services is needed. Such services include (but are not limited to) advising and counseling, registration, and financial aid. An action team will recommend ways to facilitate student movement between sectors.

- *Proficiency-based Education.* With the advent of school reform in Oregon, OUS developed a Proficiency-based Admission Standards System (PASS). The community colleges have been working on a proficiency model for entry into specific programs (PREP). How these two admission strategies will relate is the focus of this action team.

- *Joint Boards Articulation Agreement of 1993.* An agreement approved in 1993 by the Joint Boards of Education, sets out principles guiding articulation between the community college and higher education sectors. The agreement needs revision to reflect current realities, such as the exponential growth of distance education efforts.

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